1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

plateau from Antagarh tahsil. The northern half of this north-eastern plateau is Kondagaon tahsil, and the southern Jagdalpur. The height of the plateau varies from 2,500 or 2,400 feet at its northern and southern edges to about 1,800 feet near Jagdalpur. It is a region of evergreen forests, with the beautiful sal (*Shorea robusta*) as its characteristic tree. The temperature seldom exceeds 104° in the summer, and at Jagdalpur descends to 40° in the winter, while hoar frosts are not uncommon in the forests. Kondagaon tahsil is under-developed and jungly, much of it and Antagarh having been comparatively recently settled by Gond immigrants from Chhattisgarh. Jagdalpur, on the other hand, has miles of excellent rice cultivation in its extensive open plains, and is the only heavily populated part of the State, except adjacent parts of Dantewara. On its south-eastern and southern edges, however, it has hilly country heavily forested or inhabited by primitive Parjas and Bison-horn Marias.

The north-west corner of the State is the Antagarh tahsil. The north of this is a continuation of the Chhattisgarh-Kanker plain 800 or 900 feet above sea-level, bounded on the west and north by the Chanda and Drug districts of the Central Provinces and by Kanker State. This plain, the second main natural division of Bastar, is reached from Keskal and north Kondagaon through the Amabera *pargana*, which, though on the 2,000 feet plateau, is in Antagarh, by a forest road descending the steep Matlaghat by a recently re-aligned and easily-graded descent. The main road from Jagdalpur and Kondagaon through Antagarh to Rajnandgaon rail-head enters the tahsil in the Benur *pargana* on the 2,000 feet plateau and descends 200 or 300 feet to Narainpur which, with the adjacent *parganas* of Kurangal, Dugal, Baragaon, Ghat Jhorian and Bare Jhorian, as well as Benur and the lowland or 'Kalpatti' villages of Chhote Dongar *pargana*, are an intermediate stage between the true 2,000 feet plateau and the plain of north Antagarh. The inhabitants are mostly what were called by Glasfurd and other early writers Jhorias, in appearance scarcely distinguishable from the Marias of the Abujhmar hills, with similar dancing dress, and customs similar, but considerably modified by sojourn in the lowlands and contact with other tribes. From Narainpur a forest road runs westward along the Nei Bherat valley to Sonpur, with an extension thence to Paralkot and Maroda, where it meets another forest road that comes westward from Taroki on the Narainpur-Antagarh road across the north Antagarh plain. The Sonpur, Paralkot and Paralkot-Kalpatti *parganas* are really lowland *parganas* in the middle of highland Maria *parganas*, and the two latter belong properly speaking to the north Antagarh plain. The

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

133 Madras if it had been reasonably managed. The few 'Dorla' villages are the most miserable in Bastar.

The third sub-division is the Kolab-Sabari valley from the southern slopes of the hills at the edge of the 2,000 feet plateau and the Dantewara valley plateau to the border of the Bhadrachalam taluq of Madras on the south. The northern portion of this, the Sukma zamindari, is a punchbowl ringed by the high edges of the Jagdalpur and Dantewara plateaux from Tulsidongri in the north-east counter-clockwise to a point in the south-west of the zamindari where the foot-hills of the Gogonda-Tikanpalli hills approach the Kolab-Sabari near Chikpalli; the hills are continued across the river and the Bastar border still counter-clockwise towards Malkangiri, and thence back to Tulsidongri. There are two small detached portions of Jagdalpur tahsil in the north of the zamindari, around Kukanar and the lower waters of the Thakawara and Kumakoleng rivers respectively. South of Sukma zamindari the valley opens out again to form the main block of Konta tahsil, including the former Bhiji zamindari, the level of which falls nearly to 250 feet above the sea by Konta at its south-east corner; here the Bastar portion of the valley is very narrow, as nearly all the south of Konta tahsil is occupied by the ranges of the Golapalli mountains which at one point reach a height of more than 2,800 feet.

132 133 137 In contrast with north Bastar, with its evergreen moist forests, cool climate, abundant water-supply and often thick population, south Sukma, almost all Konta, the Pamer-Kotapalli zamindari and much of south Bijapur are hot dry regions of deciduous forests, deficient water and sparse population. The rivers are short stony torrents rushing down in the monsoon to the adjacent Godavari, Talper or Kolab-Sabari, and drying up often before January. Teak is the characteristic timber tree.

135 162 There will be found in Appendix I a statement of the areas and populations of the six tahsils and four zamindaris into which modern Bastar is divided. Each of these administrative units is called after the name of its headquarters; except Jagdalpur with a (1931) population of 10,128, the other headquarters are only villages, and not always large villages; in 1931, of the 2,442 villages in Bastar only five had populations between 2,000 and 2,500, and forty-two populations between 1,000 and 2,000.

634 Frequent mention was made in this chapter of the smaller *pargana* unit. The first use that I can find of this word is in Appendix IX of Glasfurd's 1862 report, in which, of the forty-three non-zamindari sub-divisions of Bastar, seventeen are called *parganas* and twenty-six *garhs*. In Elliot's 1855 report the names are given of forty-eight *garhs* and nine taluqs into which the non-zamindari

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Dongar, sleeping the first night at Orcha, twenty-five miles from Kurmer, descending in the morning fourteen miles to Dhaurai, doing their selling and buying and eating a noon meal, and then return that afternoon to sleep again at Orcha, reaching Kurmer on the third day by noon. And their route is no easy one, but up hill and down dale along rough mountain paths. The men will carry heavy loads balanced at either end of a carrying stick borne on their shoulder, proceeding at a jog trot, for nine or ten miles over similar paths, but stop to drink and paddle at the streams, and get very exhausted if they have to carry weights much farther; on the other hand, after food and an hour's rest they are ready to walk back at once to their villages. Three Hill Marias on my last visit to the hills came to my camp at Itulnar some seventy miles across country, with letters, and met me on the march at 8 a.m. in the hills on the third morning after they had set out, having done twelve miles that morning along an exceptionally arduous mountain path. When the crops are ripe on the *penda* slopes and the men are sleeping there, the women go twice a day to them with their food, and sometimes have a heavy day's reaping as well; the *penda* may be five or six miles away from the village and high above it.

Like the Nagas of the Assam hills, the Hill Marias prefer walking over hilly country to long treks on the plains, and are excellent hill and tree climbers. All the Koitor of Bastar, in fact, are remarkably agile tree climbers, and seem to walk up trees rather than climb.

The Bison-horn Maria is even better developed physically than the Hill Maria, and has similar powers of endurance, though on the level plateau villages he does not become the adept hill climber that every Hill Maria is. He leaves less, however, to his women. He can be seen at his physical fittest when dancing for hours with tireless verve and agility, wearing on his head a heavy head-dress of bison-horns with plumes of peacock and jungle-cock feathers and strings of cowries, with a heavy cylindrical drum of hollowed tree-trunk three feet or more long slung from his shoulders, and sometimes carrying a small son frogwise on his chest. He will carry stick-loads of grain sixty or seventy miles to market in the Godavari valley, for even he makes as yet only little use of carts or beasts of burden; the Hill Maria makes none at all.

The Hill Maria wears nothing but a loin-cloth of coarse cotton in winter, summer and rains, though an occasional man may have a piece of similar cloth big enough to wrap over his shoulders at night, and a few headmen have blankets. His body, therefore, is inured to heat and to great cold; for frosts are frequent in his hills, and even as late as the end of March the thermometer may fall to 42°